THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

DOLIR REVIEW

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Workers' Compensation Employee Goes the Distance

By Devan Watring

Can you go the distance? Can you fight the sweat and quench the thirst? Just when you think you can't take another step, you do. Twenty miles a day for three days equals 60 miles. Can you cross the finish line? It's all part of the fight against breast cancer.

On May 18 and 20, in Boston, MA, 3,000 women walked those 60 miles for breast cancer. One of these women was my mom, Holly Watring. She first saw an article about the Avon Three Day Walk for Breast Cancer in an issue of Walking magazine two years ago. My mom wanted to sign up because her mom had died from ovarian cancer. It was a cause she felt strongly about. Unfortunately, this did not work out because all of the spots to walk were filled. So, she waited another year to try again.

After successfully signing up this year, tragedy occurred. Not only did her brother, Richard, die of cancer, but her father was also diagnosed with the disease, and is now undergoing chemotherapy. Fortunately, he has a 95 percent chance of surviving.

Holly Watring in Boston.

It comforts my mom to know that the money she raised will go towards cancer research and a cure. Every walker had to raise or come up with $1,900 to participate. This is not a race. It is a walk for life.

On a personal note, I'm really proud of my mom and would like to do this when I get older. She has been going through hard times and it was good to see her excited about the challenge and the journey she embarked on.

We can all go the distance if we try. Sometimes we just need a little push to get started. If you would like to make a contribution to the fight against breast cancer, contact Holly Watring at (816) 792-5737.

Holly Watring is a docket clerk in the Kansas City office of the Division of Workers' Compensation. The above article was written by her13-year old daughter, Devan and appeared in their local newspaper. According to Watring, she was inspired by her trip to Boston. The event drew over 3,000 walkers and raised five million dollars toward breast cancer research. "I didn't know one person but I felt like they were all my friends because we all worked together as a team and we helped motivate each other," Watring said.

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Employee Profile

Sue Ann Loesch

Title: *Executive I*
Division of Workers' Compensation
Fraud and Noncomliance Unit
Location: *Jefferson City, MO*

Q ***What do you consider the most important thing your program/division does for Missouri citizens?***

A The Fraud and Noncompliance Unit does two things that I feel are equally important. One is conducting investigations and referring fraudulent or noncompliant cases to the Office of the Attorney General for prosecution. The other is conducting presentations to educate employees, employers and others about the requirements for carrying workers' compensation insurance and the penalties for committing fraud.

Q ***How does what you personally do in your job help or affect Missouri citizens?***

A I ensure that both my work and the support staff's work is completed quickly and accurately so citizens' complaints can be investigated in a timely manner. I design presentations for the chief administrator and investigators to use in educating the public about fraud and noncompliance.

Q ***How do you think what you do could be improved or changed to better serve Missourians?***

A I can't think of any major changes that need to be made specifically for my job or the Fraud and Noncompliance Unit. However, I believe there are ways that state government as a whole could be improved, which would include our office. That would be cutting out some of the levels of approvals and paperwork that must be passed from one office to another before a task can be completed.

Q ***What part of what you do gives you the most satisfaction/pride/feeling of accomplishment?***

A The computer knowledge I have gained since working at the Fraud and Noncompliance Unit definitely gives me a feeling of accomplishment. Our Unit has a specially designed Case Management Information System, which contains detailed investigative information relating to each case. In addition, being part of a unit that assists in bringing justice to those who attempt to circumvent the law helps me feel I am doing an important service for the citizens of Missouri.

Someone to Know:
Fernando Mendez,
Internal Security Officer

As the Department's internal security officer, Fernando Mendez investigates allegations of all types of internal fraud or abuse, either by DOLIR employees or by others. In addition to this investigative function, Mendez performs security audits and reviews, and evaluates Department security policies and procedures. He also provides management and staff with security information and materials to make employees more aware of the ways they can help protect the assets of the Department.

If you have information about a situation that could be considered fraud or abuse, please contact him, anonymously, if need be, to report it. Employees are urged to report allegations of physical threats, cases of improperly divulging confidential information, theft, misuse of state property or other violations of law or policy by Department employees, regardless of their position. Mendez can be reached by department e-mail, by telephone at (573) 751-7073, by fax at (573) 751-2947 or by writing him at PO Box 59, Jefferson City, MO 65104.

Introducing … Tunde M. Akinmoladun

Dr. Tunde M. Akinmoladun has joined the Missouri Division of Workers' Compensation as the manager of the Missouri Workers' Safety Program.

As manager of the program, Akinmoladun is responsible for making sure that Missouri employers receive the safety services required by the law. He is also in charge of the development of new and innovative methods to ensure Missouri workers remain safe on the job.

Dr. Akinmoladun has been actively involved in the environmental and occupational health and safety industry since the early 1980s, and has extensive experience as an educator, manager and consultant in these areas.

The Missouri Workers' Safety Program is an outreach program of the Missouri Division of Workers' Compensation.

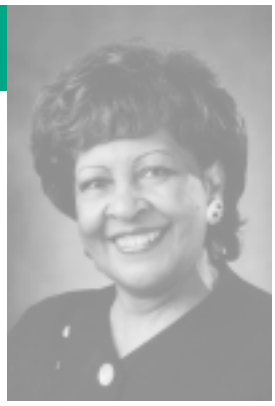
St. Louis Employment Security Building Undergoes Renovations

St. Louis Division of Employment Security offices are undergoing extensive renovation to install new heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

The building, at 505 Washington in downtown St. Louis, was built in 1959 and still had much of the original heating and cooling equipment in service. Although the system had been modified and changed over the years, it was still not able to operate properly, resulting in less than ideal indoor temperature conditions for workers there.The project is scheduled for completion in February 2002.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Sharing Innovative Ideas



"Innovation" can be a scary word when used at work.

It conjures up images of cutting-edge technology, unknown processes and steep learning curves we don't always welcome.

Yes, learning new ways to do things can, at first, be frustrating and time consuming.

But the end results can be extraordinary. New and better products and processes help us do our jobs better and faster, and they help our customers do what they need to do quicker, easier and with less paperwork.

Everyone wins.

That is why I am so proud of the fact that our Department has recently been honored with the 2001 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity. Our Research and Analysis section's work on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses was selected to receive the award, given at a ceremony at the Governor's Mansion this month. Their innovative thinking about ways to collect data on workplace injuries and illnesses is just one example of the kind of improvement we must strive for.

It is for this very reason that I am so excited about the Department's new Employee Suggestion Program (ESP). Starting this month, employees have a way to submit their ideas and suggestions about how to improve the services we provide. It might be by making processes simpler, cutting out unneeded steps or paperwork or taking steps to improve the quality or timeliness of a service we provide.

Do you have an idea that can improve procedures, products, services, working conditions, security, safety or workflow? Will it increase productivity or employee motivation? Does it provide new, innovative services or products? Can it help us save time, materials, labor or money? I encourage every one of you to submit your ideas to the ESP program by using form MODOL-4449 found on the Intranet.

Innovation must be a priority for the whole Department, from the personnel on the front lines to top management. But it is you, the professionals who deal daily with our customers, processes and products, who are the most valuable source of information about how to improve what we do.

So, if you have ESP please share it. Everyone will win.

Research & Analysis Wins Governor's Award

By Tammy Cavender, Strategic Planner

Five department employees were honored during an award ceremony hosted by Governor Bob Holden and the Office of Administration. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Research and Analysis team was one of eight teams to receive the 2001 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity.

The Research and Analysis section annually collects survey reports from approximately 5,400 private industry establishments in Missouri. The survey reports include the number and frequency of work-related injuries and illnesses. Many employers complained the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) booklet they were asked to fill out was thick and difficult to complete. To address this problem, the Research and Analysis team created a one-page response form that is mailed to private industry employers along with the SOII booklet. This form simplifies the reporting process for Missouri employers. If employers have no injuries or illnesses to report for the survey year, the employer can complete the single-page form rather than the booklet. This saves employers an exceptional amount of time.

The one-page response form is more efficient for employers to complete. It has improved the current response rate by 14 percent and the current survey rate by 11 percent from the equivalent time last year. The Department has also witnessed a cost savings and increased efficiency within the Research and Analysis section. Increased responses from employers have reduced the volume of follow-up survey mailings that need to be sent to employers. The volume of envelopes used in this second mailing was reduced by approximately 700, or by 27 percent from the equivalent time last year. This reduction in volume also reduced costs by approximately $600. The time saved from telephone and mail follow-up is approximately four working days per person.

The employees receiving this honor are: Debbie Vaughan, Linda Budnik, Leslie Keeling, Cheryl Spears and Fran Draper.

The Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity recognizes outstanding accomplishments of employees in Missouri State Government. It is a group award recognizing teamwork as an important factor in quality and productivity improvement.

Stoic People, Cryptic Voices

The Underground World of Early Miners

By Jim Walker, Division of Labor Standards

The following article was submitted by Jim Walker, a mine safety instructor with the Division of Labor Standards.

Here he shares with us some of his thoughts and knowledge about the history of mining.

Early photographs of miners often reveal a stoic stare on a work-hardened face. Indeed, the difficult life they lived gave them very little to smile about. But their stoicism was more than skin deep. It carried over into the words they used to describe conditions inside the mines. The words they selected were concise and to the point, but it took a miner to understand the meaning. For example, the elevator that lowered miners down the shaft had sides constructed of wooden slats or wire mesh. The miners referred to it as the *cage*.

Mine tunnels were virtually devoid of landmarks, yet precise directions could be given by referencing an individual's location in regard to the mine's surface opening. If the last intersection in the mine was between miner and the surface, he was *inby* the last *cross-cut*. But, if the miner had not yet reached the last intersection and was between it and the surface, he was *outby* the last *cross-cut*.

Perhaps the most descriptive terms were reserved for the various gases that could be found in mines. Early miners used the word *damp* instead of gas. That was probably due to a trend at the time of referring to foggy weather conditions as *damps.* Since gases are a vapor, the name was applied there as well. Although they had no way of determining the chemical composition of the gases that were encountered, the miners were able to identify and distinguish between at least five different gases, including:

Firedamp – A mixture of methane and air that will burn or explode when ignited. The "fire" in firedamp

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Neet's News ...

Caring Communities Hosts Annual Conference to Aid Missouri Families

Caring Communities hosted its seventh annual conference, "Go the Distance, Vision to Results, June 13-14 at Tan-Tar-A resort in Osage Beach, MO. The conference brought together more than 600 people from across the state and nation to enhance the skills that will help them continue to improve the lives of children and families. Twenty-two DOLIR staff members attended the conference.

A DOLIR team meeting was held prior to the conference. At the meeting, local resource team members from the Department discussed issues and problems faced in their communities, and shared ideas about how to better serve those communities by using the Department's current resources.

Neet McCowen is Caring Communities Coordinator for the Department. To reach her, please call (573) 751-3817.

(Top Photo) From left, Donna Schulte, Neet McCowen, Tom Pfeiffer and Catherine Leapheart consider a question posed by a local resource team member at the DOLIR/Caring Communities team meeting.

(Right Photo) Gracia Backer, director of the Division of Employment Security, listens to discussion at the team meeting.

Front row from left: Tom Colvin, DLS; Connie Posey, DES; Neet McCowen, Caring Communities; Linda Wright, DES; Catherine Leapheart, Director; Khesha Duncan, DLS; Tom Pfeiffer, Deputy Director. Second row from left: Jerry Tresenriter, DLS; Alma McMullin, DES; Colleen Baker, DLS; Don Duncan, DES; Nancy Miller, DES; Richard Kirkpatrick, DES; Pat Wylie, DES; Donna Schulte, School-to-Careers. Not pictured but in attendance, Joann Lindemann, Public Affairs; Tammy Cavender, Strategic Planning; Gracia Backer, DES; Janet Kremer, CHR; Lori Aduddell, CHR; Larry Leip, DWC; Dwayne Hickey, DWC and Margie Roberts, DWC.

Stoic People, Cryptic Voices continued...

comes from the fact that the mixture is flammable.

Blackdamp – So named since it caused the flame in miners' lights to go out. This oxygen deficient atmosphere was often found in abandoned areas of the mine and could result in suffocation.

Afterdamp – A deadly combination of gases found after a mine fire or explosion. Afterdamp is toxic to breathe, may be oxygen deficient and contains carbon monoxide.

Whitedamp – Black powder was a commonly used blasting agent in mining operations. Its use created a white smoke, hence the name whitedamp. The carbon monoxide it contained was toxic.

Stinkdamp – A mixture of hydrogen sulfide and air, stinkdamp got its name from the "rotten egg" odor of hydrogen sulfide. It is highly toxic and can be explosive.

The terms used by the miners were perhaps a mirror of their lives, sometimes harsh and often misunderstood by outsiders. And the cryptic words they used to describe their underground world reflected their clannish attitudes.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Mack L. Brushwood, Jr.

"After my retirement on February 1, 1985, I was of the opinion that I would pursue my hobbies of gardening, hunting and fishing and traveling," said Brushwood. But his retirement has not worked out that way. "I became interested in helping the elderly and I have served on many committees," he said. "My hobby time became less and less as my volunteer activities increased."

Brushwood's post-retirement resume is an impressive one.

In 1986 he was elected president of Boone County American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Chapter #3194 and served two terms. Brushwood also served as president of Boone County Council of Aging until appointed district director of the AARP for 14 counties in central Missouri and serving for four years. Since 1996 he has served as AARP 9th Congressional District coordinator, responsible for disseminating information in the 21 counties of the district and setting up debates of the candidates during the last three elections.

But, he also finds time to put his organizational talents to good use on projects of a more personal nature.

"My wife and I have set up four reunions of one of my World War II Air Bases located in Brooks Field, TX," said Brushwood. "We are currently looking forward to planning another reunion."

"I have enjoyed my retirement and the volunteer work I have been active in. I hear people say, 'Since I retired I do not have anything to do.' I cannot say that, in fact I hardly have any spare time," said Brushwood. And added, "Some time in the future when I am not so busy maybe I will have time to garden, hunt, fish and travel."

Where Are They Now? highlights DOLIR retirees and their experiences since leaving the Department. If you would like to be featured in **Where Are They Now?**
Contact us at: **Where Are They Now?**
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Jefferson City, MO 65102-1958
Or e-mail: jlindemann@dolir.state.mo.us

Dunn's Safety Tips - First Aid for Heat Stroke

When it comes to heat, your body is like a car. If either one overheats, it can cause minor or major problems. But knowing what to do can help your body (or your car for that matter) keep running. When a person has heat stroke, it's like a car running with almost all the water boiled out of the radiator. It's very serious, and can lead suddenly and without warning to a complete breakdown.

• Symptoms of Heat Stroke

When the body overheats, it can go into crisis. Usually we sweat when we're hot, but when someone has heat stroke, there is no sweat, and the skin is very dry and hot. Other symptoms include strong, fast pulse, very high temperature (106 to 112 degrees Fahrenheit) and confused, strange or angry behavior. The person may feel chilled, nauseated or dizzy, and soon becomes unconscious.

• Act Immediately

Contact an ambulance right away. If the person has stopped breathing, use artificial respiration to get breathing going again. Move the victim to a cooler area and if possible, soak the person in a cool bath. Use a fan or cold packs if available. Keep the victim lying down with feet raised.

• Avoid Heat Stroke

If you know you'll be exposed to greater heat or humidity than normal, take several days to get used to it by spending time in similar conditions. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of cool water. Even when you're not thirsty, your body is losing fluid that needs to be replaced. Alcohol makes it harder for your body to keep cool, so avoid alcohol when you do hard work in hot weather.

Source: ©2000 Arnot Ogden Medical Center. All rights reserved.

Steve Dunn is the Department's safety coordinator. He is also director of the Mine and Cave Safety and Health Program for the Division of Labor Standards.

Lifestyles

Retirees from June 2001

Division of Workers' Compensation

Hassell Onderdonk, Court Reporter II

Division of Employment Security

Richard Conley, Management Analyst III, UI Programs
Marcia Johnson, Unemployment Insurance Auditor II, Contributions Field
Alice Walter, Claims Technician II, Springfield Regional Claims Center

Lifestyles

New Employees from June 2001

Administration

Barbara Hughes, Computer Information Technology Specialist I, Information Systems

Division of Employment Security

Michelle Bilyeu, Contributions Technician I, Employer Contributions
Finee Bowles, Claims Technician I, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Jean Brandt, Clerk Typist II, Appeals
Gary Chatham, Unemployment Insurance Auditor I, Contributions Field
Wendy Coffman, Clerk Typist II, Employer Contributions
Sandy Morrow, Clerk Typist III, Benefits
Denise Severs, Clerk Typist II, Employer Contributions

Governor's Council on Disability

Julie Lowrey, Clerk Typist III

Lifestyles

Promotions from June 2001

Administration

John Calcaterra, Computer Information Technologist III, Information Systems
Laura Distler, Computer Information Technology Specialist II, Information Systems
Joann Lindemann, Public Information Coordinator, Public Affairs
Carl Voss, Budget Analyst II, Financial Management

Division of Labor Standards

Rhonda Farris, Wage and Hour Investigator II

Division of Employment Security

Shirley Dusheke, Clerk III, Appeals
Moneen Gilleland, Contributions Supervisor III, Employer Contributions
Holly Gregory, Field Auditor III, Contributions Field
Gene Hammond, Field Auditor III, Contributions Field
Pamela Harris, Field Auditor III, Contributions Field
Rebecca Leonard, Field Auditor III, Contributions Field
Glenda Liescheidt, Claims Supervisor II, Benefits
Betty Means, Claims Supervisor II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center

Janella Preston is May Employee of the Month

Janella Preston

Janella Preston, a Clerk III with the Division of Employment Security in Jefferson City, is the Department's May 2001 Employee of the Month.

Preston's co-workers say that despite having responsibility for a wide variety of duties and a heavy workload, she eagerly goes the extra step to get a job done correctly. They add, that she "often goes above and beyond what would be expected, and provides tremendous support for the Employer Contribution-Liability Unit."

Reflections

Marcia Johnson

Marcia Johnson retired June 30, 2001 after more than 21 years of service to the Department. Johnson worked as a contributions field auditor for the Division of Employment Security in Kansas City.

"My fondest memories as a field auditor involve the surprise and appreciation of employers when they saw that a government bureaucracy could give personal and friendly attention to their businesses," says Johnson. "And, of course," she adds, "the memories of the wonderful friends I have made during my years with the Division."

Quote of the Month...

People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.....

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